

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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47

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 041150Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2564

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 1124

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG

SUBJECT: OCCIDENTAL DISPUTE WITH LIBYAN GOVERNMENT

REF: STATE 237188

1. AS A PRACTICAL MATTER, EARLIEST OXY EMPLOYEES AND DEPENDENTS COULD BEGIN TO LEAVE COUNTRY, EVEN GIVEN LARG READINESS TO FACILITATE THEIR DEPARTURE, WOULD BE OCTOBER 8. NEXT THREE DAYS ARE END OF RAMADAN HOLIDAY, AND OFFICIALS SIMPLY WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR NECESSARY FORMALITIES UNTIL THEN. IN FACT, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT MOST OXY EMPLOYEES WOULD BE WILLING TO DEPART WITHOUT TIME TO PACK THEIR EFFECTS AND DISPOSE OF THEIR SALEABLE POSSESSIONS.

2. THERE IS NO, REPEAT NO, ATMOSPHERE OF PANIC AMONG OXY EMPLOYEES HERE. COMPANY EMPLOYEES ARE ANNOYED AT ORDER KEEPING THEM IN COUNTRY, SINCE MANY HAD MADE PLANS TO TRAVEL OVER HOLIDAYS, BUT THEY ARE CERTAINLY NOT MILLING AROUND DESPERATELY. WE HAVE HAD NO REQUEST FOR OUR INTERVENTION FROM INDIVIDUALS.

3. WE DO NOT, REPEAT NOT, UNDERESTIMATE GRAVITY OF WHAT LARG HAS DONE, BUT THE SITUATION SHOULD BE KEPT IN PROPORTION. OIL COMPANY EMPLOYEES HERE ARE USED TO ARBITRARY ACTIONS BY THE GOVERNMENT, AND MAKE ALLOWANCES FOR THEM. OXY OFFICIALS IN U.S. ARE CLEARLY OVERREACTING.

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4. EMBASSY OFFICER JUST RETURNED FROM MEETING WITH OXY PRESIDENT

ESPEY, WHO WAS ON TELEPHONE WITH SENIOR LIBYAN OIL
EXPERT MUNTASSIR. ESPEY ASKED MUNTASSIR TO TELL OIL
MINISTER MABROUK THAT HE WANTED TO SEE HIM TO ASK
THAT PROHIBITION ON TRAVEL BE MODIFIED TO ALLOW DEPARTURE
OF DEPENDENTS. ESPEY'S AIM IS TO CHIP AWAY AT ORDER. HE ALSO
SAID HE WOULD TRY TO GET LARG PERMISSION FOR HIS TRAVEL TO
NEW YORK FOR NEGOTIATIONS, AND THAT LARG DELEGATION WOULD BE
HEADED BY MUNTASSIR. ESPEY DID NOT, REPEAT NOT, MENTION
DR. HAMMER'S ORDER FOR IMMEDIATE PULLOUT OF OXY PERSONNEL,
NOR DID HE SAY ANYTHING ABOUT COMMUNICATIONS DIFFICULTIES
WITH U.S. HEADQUARTERS.
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